The Cleveland Museum of Art

Press Release

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CMA APPOINTS CURATOR OF GREEK AND ROMAN ART

(Cleveland, OH) Cleveland Museum of Art director Robert P. Bergman announced today the appointment of Michael J. Bennett as the museum's Associate Curator of Greek and Roman Art. The appointment inaugurates a new era of specialization in the museum's curatorial coverage of ancient art. When the ongoing search for a Curator of Egyptian and Ancient Near Eastern Art is completed this winter, the museum will for the first time benefit from full-time professional expertise in Greek/Roman art and Egyptian/Ancient Near Eastern Art, two distinct art historical areas. Arielle P. Kozloff, who recently ended her long tenure at the museum, had continued a decades-old tradition of single curatorial coverage of the vast range of ancient art.

Dr. Bennett has since 1995 been Curator of Classical Art and Senior Curator at the Tampa Museum of Art, known for its distinguished holdings of antiquities, particularly since the purchase of the Joseph Veach Noble collection in 1986. He has enhanced the collection with several excellent acquisitions, including a number of important early Greek bronzes and a 7th-century East Greek *oinochoe*. Between 1989 and 1994 he served as Keeper of Greek and Roman Coins at the Harvard University Art Museums. Dr. Bennett is widely grounded in the area of Greek and Roman art but pursues Greek art as his scholarly research specialty. His first book, *Belted Heroes and Bound Women: The Myth of the Homeric Warrior King* was published by Rowman and Littlefield in the monograph series "Greek Studies: Interdisciplinary Approaches" in 1997. He is presently involved in the preparation of an exhibition of early Greek antiquities from Sicily, scheduled for exhibition in the United States in the year 2000. His skills as a connoisseur, scholar and writer make him ideally suited to assume the role of author of the museum's catalogue of its Greek and Roman collection.

A California native, Dr. Bennett received his B.A. from the University of California, San Jose, where his studies focused on the history of art and Latin language. After a period of study in Florence he returned to this country to pursue graduate studies at Harvard University,

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where he received both his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees. In addition to his expertise in Greek and Roman art, Dr. Bennett commands extensive knowledge of ancient Greek and Latin literature, which feature significantly in his research. Dr. Bennett spent two seasons, 1987 and 1988, as part of the Harvard-Cornell archaeological expedition to Sardis (Turkey), where he participated in the ongoing excavations of that important ancient city. He has taught both at Harvard and, while at Tampa, as an Adjunct Professor at Eckerd College in St. Petersburg.

In commenting on the appointment, Dr. Bergman said: "We are delighted to have been able to attract Michael Bennett to Cleveland. An exhaustive search convinced me that he is among the most talented and accomplished younger scholars working in the field of Greek and Roman art, and he has shown himself to have an excellent eye for quality. He is equally at home in the art market, at the scholar's desk, and in the public arena. The fact that at such a relatively early point in his career he's already completed his first book bodes really well for the future. His combination of talents is perfect for the CMA and he'll be a great addition to our excellent and expanding curatorial team."

Dr. Bennett commented: "I really enjoyed my time at the Tampa Museum of Art and was fortunate to have tremendous support there. But Cleveland offered an irresistible opportunity to work with a superb collection in a great institution whose leadership emphasizes scholarship while also pursuing goals that serve the public. These are ideals to which I can relate. I look forward to playing a role at the CMA during the upcoming exciting period in its history and to being part of its great staff."

Dr. Bennett, his wife Joey, and their seven-year-old son, Aaron, will take up residency in Cleveland on or about June 15th.

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